1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of division would not apply. It seems therefore to be a question of surplus. Every family is entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

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1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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PLATE 26 $\frac{1}{A}$

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

888 142 [292] a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 577 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

$\frac{1}{A}$, /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

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512 264 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed. [576]

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk. [868]

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

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stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her husband, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon-

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THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

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578 607 276 576 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to [152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This 573 578 276 152 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

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was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelomoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

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clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

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Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

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Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

62 571 561 [888] **Government.**—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 822 [626] A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888] Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562] In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 ## Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological

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